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TEACHING THE TEACHERS

—Donald McDonald

THE

Commonweal

HOW NEUTRAL IS NEHRU?

by Anthony J. Parel

STOICISM IN THE SOUTH

by Walker Percy

William Dunlea John P. Sisk

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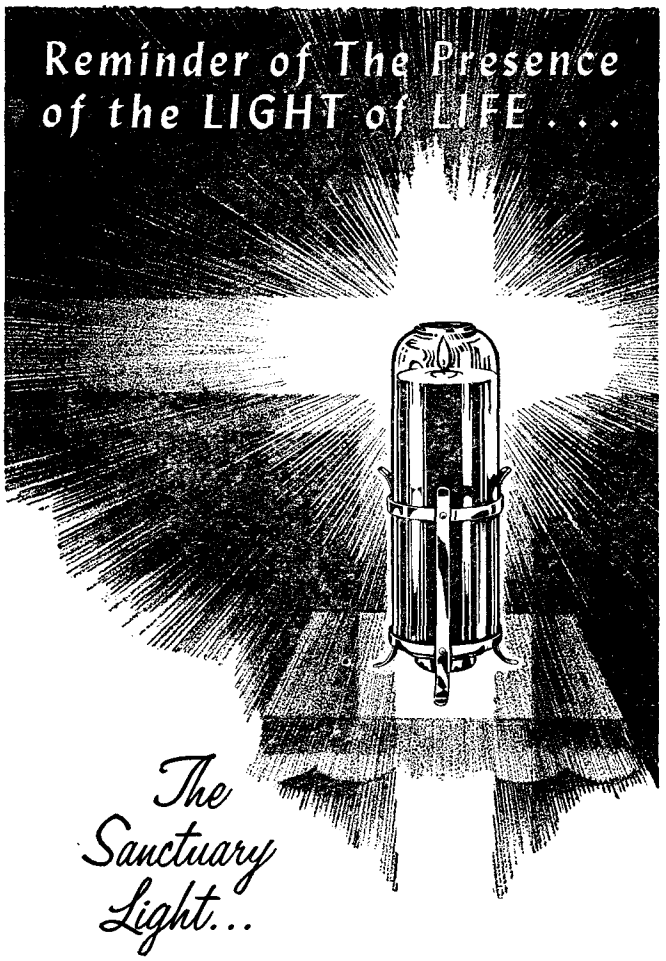

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THE
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A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SECOND YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

THE HEALTH ISSUE

IT IS OBVIOUS that very few people are willing to discuss Mr. Eisenhower's physical condition with any degree of frankness. Weeks after his operation, the question of the President's health remains the most delicate issue in American politics. Unless Mr. Eisenhower surprises everyone by withdrawing from the race, it is likely to remain so.

There is no strictly logical reason why discussions of the President's physical condition should be quite so touchy. After his heart attack, Mr. Eisenhower himself was very explicit about his condition, and he made it clear then that he favored a full and frank disclosure of all the relevant facts. This is just good sense; the state of the President's health directly involves the national welfare, and a heart attack, followed by major surgery, cannot be shrugged off. Yet serious discussion is not taking place on any extended scale, and it is perhaps too much to expect that it would.

In large part, the absence of such discussion is probably due to the popular feeling that to mention life expectancy is to shorten it. To many people, even raising the idea that the burdens of the Presidency may now be too much for Mr. Eisenhower seems somehow disloyal, too much like hitting a popular figure when he is down. This attitude is never put into words, because it is not very rational, but it is nonetheless real.

Nationally syndicated columnists like Doris Fleeson can run the risk of citing medical sources which take a gloomy view on future health and life-expectancy in cases like Mr. Eisenhower's. But it is significant that the Democratic spokesmen who have raised similar points have all been Party officials, rather than candidates dependent upon popular votes. The candidates themselves, it seems quite clear, are afraid of antagonizing the public on this issue.

For their part, the Republicans naturally do not relish too much discussion of the President's health. In particular, they resent any suggestion of a "doctors' plot" to issue overly optimistic reports on Mr. Eisenhower's condition. But they are nevertheless reported to feel that they really cannot lose on the health issue, unless the President has a disastrous set-back. Most voters, they are convinced, are quite willing to leave the matter to Mr. Eisenhower's own judgment; if he thinks he is able to run again, they will vote for him. And if Mr. Eisenhower does run, GOP strategists think that every critical discussion of his health will simply influence more voters in his direction. As they see it, in 1956 many votes for Ike will be gestures of sympathy and affection, something like political get-well cards. As they figure it, they can't lose.

IF ONE judges only by what has happened in the weeks immediately after Mr. Eisenhower's operation, the Republican leaders may be right. Mr. Eisenhower's popularity is phenomenal. With him at the head of the ticket, and with "Peace and Prosperity" as a slogan, Republican confidence is understandable. There is, however, one possible fly in the Republican ointment: the nature of Mr. Eisenhower's popularity, which is and has always been very personal.

Americans clearly admire Dwight D. Eisenhower as a person. They do not identify him particularly with Republican principles; indeed, they admire him most because they see him as a basically non-political figure, above and beyond purely partisan interests. Right now, after twenty years out of power, the Republicans are enjoying the benefits of Mr. Eisenhower's popularity; it is natural enough

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that they want him to run, no matter what. But under certain circumstances Mr. Eisenhower's great personal popularity can hurt them as much as it has helped them in the past.

The President has spent his entire adult life in an atmosphere in which duty came first. After his heart attack he was quoted in a much disputed U.P. dispatch as saying that he had to run, because his associates had told him there was not time enough to find another candidate. Now there is even less time, and Mr. Eisenhower may again respond to what he conceives as the voice of duty. Then, if his health stays reasonably good, all will be well for the Republicans. But if his health is obviously not up to par, or if he suffers from a severe recurrence of either his heart disease or his ileitis, the voters are likely to blame the Republican Party, not Ike. And in such an event, Mr. Eisenhower's popularity with the voters would only be matched by the unpopularity of anyone associated in the public mind with "making Ike run" against his real wishes and best interests. The Republican high command may face more of a problem in the health issue than it realizes.

TURN OF THE SCREW

THE COMMUNIST Party in the United States took a historic step last week. Where the party line zigged, they zagged. More specifically, the Party sufficiently recovered from the shock administered by Nikita Khrushchev's speech on Stalin to voice its own dissident opinions in a public statement. There were three main points of criticism. First, the Party said that the speech was more than the internal affair of the Soviet Communist Party and should have been made public.

More important was the second point of criticism, which rejected the explanation of Stalinist crimes in terms of "the cult of the individual." The American Communist Party demanded an analysis of how the crimes and terror were permitted "to develop and continue unchecked for twenty years." In asking why the present rulers did not stop Stalin's excesses, the Party was denying that the guilt could be assigned to Stalin alone.

The third major criticism was a direct attack on Mr. Khrushchev himself. Information from Poland makes clear, said the statement from the Party's National Committee, that Jewish culture was forcibly dissolved and Jewish leaders executed. Because Mr. Khrushchev failed to account for these outrages and the Soviet leaders still fail to mention them, some explanation is necessary, said the Committee.

Communist criticism of Communist leaders is not new. But in the past the leaders were dead or deposed. Now the American Communist Party adds its voice to others from France, Italy, and England criticizing some aspect of the present regime. But it has been even more severe in its criticism. What the results will be is not immediately clear. For Stalin, it seems, was the Great Ventriloquist. The national Communist parties echoed what he spoke. But his puppets now face a difficult choice. Can they lend themselves to another ventriloquist? Or can they attempt to think and to take on a life of their own? If the second seems too much to hope for, it should be clear that the American Communist Party has made the first choice more difficult.

NEXT WEEK

VIVIAN MERCIER writes about the rise and decline of Sean O'Casey as dramatist.

"An Irishman, asked to characterize O'Casey's class background, could do so in three words: 'a poor Protestant.' The terminology might horrify Marx or Engels, but everybody in Ireland would know what it meant. In the Ireland of O'Casey's youth, or even of mine, the phrase was equivalent to 'poor white' in the Southern U. S."

ART AND PRUDENCE

THE UNITED STATES Information Agency, created to give a correct impression of America to the world at large, has recently withdrawn from sponsorship of one of the most ambitious exhibits of American art ever planned for showing abroad. The U.S.I.A. decided that about ten of the one hundred artists represented were "unacceptable" for political reasons. The same agency had earlier objected to sending abroad an art collection which included a painting by Picasso, who was inartistic enough to join the French Communist Party. Then several weeks ago the U.S.I.A. canceled plans to send to Australia an exhibit called "Sport in Art"; it seems that the Dallas County Patriotic Council had objections to the "politics" of some of the artists represented.

It is regrettable enough that the U.S.I.A. insists

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on confusing esthetics and politics, art and the artist. But even more regrettable is the seeming weakness of the U.S.I.A. to any pressure, real or imagined, no matter how unjustified or unqualified the source of the pressure might be. The easy capitulation of the U.S.I.A. to such pressure gives the world an image of America disturbingly similar to the image of Communism: hysterically fearful of "deviation" among artists, and hysterically confusing artistic merit with "political orthodoxy."

CHALLENGE AND COMPLACENCY

THE UNITED STATES was brought rather reluctantly onto the stage of world affairs, and its emergence as the most powerful nation in the world seemed more the result of historical circumstance than of deliberate choice. Within the last few years, however, the growth of international Communism has brought about a bewildering change of circumstances, and the Eisenhower Administration has made some deliberate decisions. As a result, the dominant role of the United States in world affairs is being seriously challenged, and failure to meet the challenge completely will mean that this country may, in the near future, lose its position of pre-eminence.

The first challenge to the United States is, of course, the military one. The Russians are talking disarmament, and may even want it, on their own terms. But until they can get it on their own terms, they are quite busy building up a military machine that shall be second to none. On the other hand, a stream of military experts told Senator Symington's committee that this country is inadequately prepared for either an atomic or conventional war.

Secretary of Defense Wilson has intimated that the statements of these military men are somewhat less than convincing; each is, as he said of General Le May, "a dedicated specialist" and therefore incapable of seeing the whole defense picture. Mr. Wilson prefers to take the opinion of Secretary of the Treasury Humphrey, the dedicated specialist who wants, in a year of crisis, a balanced budget to dangle before the electorate next November.

Following much the same line of argument, various Administration officials have frequently stated that the United States simply "cannot afford to match the Russians plane for plane, or gun for gun, or H-bomb for H-bomb." The question, however, is whether we can afford not to enter into such competition with Russia, costly as it might be.

Mr. Khrushchev, for example, has not hesitated to do some saber-rattling, as when he warned his English hosts recently that England was within convenient range of Russian missiles. The Administration's decision to allow Russia to outstrip the U.S. quantitatively in long-range bombers, H-bombs and missiles increases the possibility of threat and blackmail being held over the small or shaky nations outside the Communist orbit. It may be, as many believe, that nuclear war has been outlawed by common, though tacit, consent. But the Russian leaders are, nevertheless, gearing their economy to achieving nuclear superiority over the United States, and it must be remembered that Hitler won Czechoslovakia without a shot simply because his war machine paralyzed Europe with fear.

Another threat to the status of the United States as a world power is posed by the Soviet's economic offensive. In an interesting exchange with the visiting General Twining, Mr. Khrushchev remarked, "Let us not worry about who has more planes or missiles. We will show you what competition is, economic competition." Events of the last two years show that Mr. Khrushchev was not simply making conversation. An increasing proportion of the trade of India, Burma and Egypt is being channeled to Communist countries because, among other reasons, these countries will buy goods that Western markets cannot absorb. Further, the Communists have broken the United States' monopoly on offers of technical personnel and modern machinery to underdeveloped countries, and the Soviet offer of one billion dollars to finance the Aswan High Dam in Egypt shows how far the Communists can and will go in their economic competition with the United States. This country still operates on the premise that business is business; the Soviet bloc, with its integrated economy, operates on the premise that business is politics, and their business is better than ever.

DECISION ON THE UNION SHOP

COMPULSORY union membership is always good for an argument, any time, any place, at least outside of a union convention. Recently, the Supreme Court decided a particularly knotty case, which involved the discharge of five railroad workers who claimed that their religious beliefs forbade them to belong to the union, as provided by law. In a unanimous decision, the Court ruled that requiring an employee to join a union as a condition of employment was not a violation of his rights under the First and Fifth Amendments

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and that the provisions of Federal labor law cannot be set aside by individual states.

Considerable comment, pro and con, has already appeared on this matter. We agree with the general reasoning of the Court; an important principle has been vindicated in this decision. Yet we would also point out that the number of people who will claim and be able to show a history of religious conviction that forbids union membership will always be very small. In such cases in the future, some solution other than discharge should surely be possible, perhaps along the lines of a special provision to waive formal union membership and channel equivalent of dues to some charitable organization. For public relations, if for no other reason, unions may well find generosity the better part of wisdom in such cases.

CLARIFICATION AND AGREEMENT

WE RECENTLY opposed the suggestion that Messrs. Khrushchev and Bulganin visit the United States at this time. Another journal, *Christianity and Crisis,* agreed that we might be right as far as the immediate future is concerned, but it questioned our reasons. We had written that the arguments in favor of the visit were "based on the assumption that the nature of the Communist system is subject to change. It is not. It will change only by ceasing to be."

After quoting this statement in their issue of June 11, the writer in *Christianity and Crisis* said: "This approach to Communism seems to forget that, while abstract systems may not change, people do change. They often change without formally changing the symbols and dogmas that go with their systems. If we wait until the Russians announce formally that they no longer believe in the Communist dogmas, that they no longer seek world revolution, we may lose our opportunity to cooperate with them in relation to events which may change them beyond their expectation and ours."

Because we essentially agree with this statement, we would like to clear up the apparent misunderstanding. An intransigent and rigid policy would be fatal to the United States. Encouraging changes have taken place within the Soviet Union recently, and, while they should not be exaggerated, they cannot be ignored. They allow for more nearly normal relationships between the people of Russia and those of other countries, including the United States. As *Christianity and Crisis* points out, they allow for the raising of the iron curtain at many points. For many persons the changes may lead to breaches in the ideological wall which prevents them from understanding other countries, peoples and beliefs.

Our original objection might have been stated more clearly. What we objected to was what we considered the unjustifiable hope that present improvements were manifestations of essential changes of Communist intentions, that cordial relations could be established with the reigning rulers of Russia at this time. We still think such hope unjustifiable. The Communist ideology has not changed significantly. Like *Christianity and Crisis,* we believe realistic hope rests upon the fact that people can change and that we can help them to break through the ideology.

WALTER DE LA MARE

WHEN EINSTEIN died, he was of such towering stature that his death was immediately felt. And when Dylan Thomas died, his life and growing legend had so captured public and private attention that many people felt the world to be diminished by his absence. But the deaths of some people come as quietly and naturally as most other events in their lives. Such a person was the British poet Walter de la Mare, who recently died in his eighty-fourth year.

Mr. de la Mare was a poet who was appreciated by children and other fine poets, from whom he often drew tributes. And this in spite of the fact that his best work has a subtlety and quietness that is foreign to the contemporary idiom. Constantly admired, it defied those who attempted to emulate it.

Some measure of the quality of his poetry can be gained from the following lines entitled simply "An Epitaph."

> Here lies a most beautiful lady:
> Light of step and heart was she;
> I think she was the most beautiful lady
> That ever was in the West Country.
>
> But beauty vanishes; beauty passes;
> However rare—rare it be;
> And when I crumble, who will remember
> This lady of the West Country?

It is a measure of this quality that the "lady of the West Country" will be remembered long after Mr. de la Mare's death. For the quiet accomplishment of his poetry has a sure life of its own.

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How Neutral Is Nehru?

"HIS NEUTRALITY IS AT ONCE A SOLUTION TO THE COMMUNIST PROGRAM OF EXPANSION AND AN EXPRESSION OF ASIA'S NEW CREATIVE URGE"

ANTHONY J. PAREL

THE NEUTRALITY of Prime Minister Nehru is under suspicion in the West, being taken for a kind of lubricant for the smooth running of the Soviet monolith. The Communists, on the contrary, though well aware of the incompatibility of Communism with all other systems, including neutralism, are playing a cautious diplomatic game with a view to creating and fostering misunderstanding in the non-Communist world to which Nehru belongs. "Approval" of neutralism is their trump card. By playing it at the right time, they make the West criticize the neutrals, and this criticism in turn is estranging the neutrals slowly but steadily. Their "friendship" at government level is calculated to blunt sharp ideological differences between Communism and Nehru's Gandhian Democracy, and also to make all non-Communists forget their basic ideological agreement. Communists thus make look favorable to them what in reality is Nehru's answer to the Communist challenge in Asia. By doing so they dissuade the West from evaluating it on its real merits—a subtle diplomatic victory indeed.

In what sense is Nehru neutral? He is strictly neutral in the cold war between "Westism" and Sovietism, and definitely unneutral ideologically, that is, in the struggle between Democracy and Totalitarianism.

A correct understanding of this position is possible only in reference to the wider context of the "new life" in Asia, which Nehru is trying to develop along Gandhian principles. If the West is to understand Nehru, this "newness" in Asia has first to be understood. In the past ten years the psychological attitude of Asia towards the West has undergone profound changes. There is no hostility at all in this changed psychology, but only the desire to be equal to the rest of the world. Asia has come into her own. She no longer views things from the point of view of Europe, but from that of her own needs, aspirations and problems. Nehru's neutrality is an expression of this attitude, something new, and therefore something to which the West is not accustomed. Unfortunately, this context is often forgotten, and critics still think and write as though they live in the days when Britain, France or Holland decided what India, Indo-China, or Indonesia should and would do.

Hence, as long as the cold war—the problem in Europe—remains the only background against which Nehru will be judged, he shall be misunderstood. His policy does not rest primarily on European problems, but on the problems of Asia. He is not unaware of the Communist threat in Asia, but he is also conscious of the very cause of that threat: colonialism, economic inequality, technical backwardness. Communism is evaluated as an effect, even when it poses as a remedy for the existing social, economic, and political woes of the Asian people: Communism is the effect of injustice and inequality. Therefore, if Communism is to be defeated, its causes must be attacked first. Only then can Democracy come in.

NEHRU'S neutrality is at once a solution to the Communist program of expansion and an expression of Asia's new creative urge. He has not accepted the China-solution, despite its so-called efficiency, and despite his official "friendship" with the Chinese regime. On the contrary, he has deliberately rejected the China-solution and is trying to show that Asia can find an even better solution, without having to accept the greater evil of totalitarianism. At the same time, Nehru is trying to show, too, that there are many ways of resisting that totalitarianism, many ways of being a non-Communist, ways somewhat different from those adopted by the West for the West. In other words, Nehru does not admit that to belong to the West through a military pact is the only way of being a non-Communist, or that such a pact determines international morality, or that not belonging to the Western military pact is equivalent to belonging to the opposite camp.

In Europe, military weakness can be a real danger; therefore, military strength is necessary there. But even more staggering than India's military weakness is the weakness that comes from poverty, social in-

Mr. Parel is a Jesuit scholastic and himself a native of India. This is his second article in The Commonweal.

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justice, industrial backwardness, and of being in "junior" partnership with some other power. Military alliance, then, for the purpose of fighting Communism inside India would be a futile and, indeed, self-defeating policy. The full freedom Nehru has granted Communists is equaled only by the frustration they have reaped thus far. Officially, they count only 60,000 in a population of 364 million, and their Parliamentary strength is less than five per cent. Nehru has already achieved—without military alliance—the very end which such an alliance hopes to achieve.

Furthermore, a military pact could, for India, prove to be a diplomatic blunder. It would mean a tacit declaration of hostility toward Russia and China, India's immediate neighbors. It would mean surrendering to Britain and the U.S., countries six and ten thousand miles away, the effective defense of India against possible attacks from Russia and China. Why should a country—just freed from domination by foreigners—surrender its defense to a foreign power, however friendly, for a battle which she can very well fight without such a surrender? Again, the entrance of India into a military alliance would jar the sensibilities of the masses and might well endanger Nehru's popularity. Nehru further suspects that India, for all practical purposes, would lose its equality if tied down to a military pact. Unable to make military, economic, and technical contributions, India would be playing the role of a minor power. "To become part of a power bloc," Nehru declared in Parliament, "means giving up the right to have a policy of our own, and means following that of someone else."

If military alliance is unwise and unnecessary for India, it is also, in Nehru's opinion, unwise and unnecessary for several other countries of Asia. For it is not certain that military preparedness alone can beat back Communism in Asia. The arsenals may be full, but what if minds and stomachs are empty? Why give men guns when all that they ask for is food, clothing and housing? The tragedy of China shows how arms supplied without ideas can be used against the donor. As already mentioned, Communism is an effect, a solution, and an idea. Before it conquers through arms and sedition, it appeals through ideas. Ho Chin and Mao were idealists, in this sense, before they became successful revolutionaries. Therefore it is vain to hope that Communism can be defeated without a counter-ideology as precise and as clear as Communism itself.

To succeed in Asia, Democracy, the counter-ideology, has to become both more precise and more true to its promises. At present, many Asiatics question whether the West really fears Communism, or simply the imperial ascendancy of the Soviets. If, for example, it is the immorality of Communism that the West abhors, how explain the West's friendly overtures to Tito? If the true dignity of man, irrespective of race and culture, is alleged to be the concern of the West, how explain the general Western silence about *apartheid,* or the strict immigration laws in certain democratic countries which either bar or sharply limit the admission of Asiatics? Such gaps between the theory and practice of certain working democracies engage the attention of Indian intellectuals, particularly in the universities, at this creative and formative period of India's political evolution. They are none too anxious that India should join any bloc, and, although they reject Communism, that rejection does not mean a total subscription to Western policies, which fail, all too often, to match the mood of Asia. For the one idea that finds a ready response in Asia today is the idea of equality, as opposed to paternalism and discrimination. And Nehru is trying to give this urge a constructive outlet.

In this light, Nehru's "friendship" for the Communist regimes may seem puzzling indeed. It is not, however, an ideological friendship. He is aware that a nuclear war is a terrible reality, and that the choice is between discussion across a table or the total destruction of civilization. That is why he holds that the only rule he can lay down "is that we shall try to be friendly with all countries. Nothing is so important as to be decided by a nuclear war." Moreover, his friendly relations with China must be understood in view of his rejection of its Communism. He expressed his sincere estimation of the Soviets when, sharing the platform with Khrushchev at Calcutta last December, he said: "India and the Soviet Union have different political and economic systems. Nevertheless, we try to be friendly countries and cooperate in many ways because we respect each other's freedom and way of life and do not wish to interfere. That is why we try to be friendly with all countries, whether we agree or not." Is there a more refined way of telling the Soviet salesmen that India did not wish to buy Communism from them, but only to extend to them her hospitality?

THE FAMOUS Five Principles, which, curiously enough, Nehru signed with all Communist governments, are taken by some critics as a "profession of love" for Communism. Yet three of the five principles, namely, "territorial integrity," "non-aggression" and "non-interference in internal matters," refer directly to the country-swallowing Communists more than to anyone else. The other two, "equality and mutual benefits," and "peaceful coexistence," would also refer to a system whose ultimate aim is the destruction of all else but itself. Nehru has signed the Five Principles with Tito, Chou En-lai and Khrushchev because it is from them that he needs assurance. The peaceful intentions of the democracies can be taken for granted.

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In addition to diplomatic relations, there is a regular flow of "cultural missions" to and from Communist countries. They have the less obvious but very real motive of educating Indian public opinion. The rising generation is given a chance to ask—and answer—"Why don't we embrace Communism if we are such friends of the Communists? Why?" In this way the psychological attraction for the unknown is greatly reduced: *omne ignotum pro magnifico est.* If every Indian could sincerely say, "I am neither a Communist nor 'pro-West,' but myself," Democracy would be safe in India. It is this self-confidence that Nehru is trying to create in the Indian masses. "India has a mind and soul of her own, not of today, but of twenty-five hundred years. Why should we not think along our own lines, keeping in view the conditions of our own country. . . . There is no reason why India should import conflict in the name of Socialism."

The educational purpose of the cultural exchange program is brought out by the candid remarks of Indian visitors after their return. Frank Moraes, the editor of *Times of India,* wrote on his return from China an objective account of what he saw, or was shown. The result was that he was refused entry into Russia when he was to accompany Mr. Nehru's party —lest he should write a similar account of the promised paradise. Dr. C. P. Ramaswamy of the Benares University, reviewing his visit to China before Delhi University students, said: "China is nowhere near India; the system of government and thought in China is one-pointed, regimented, collectivized. Freedom in the sense we understand does not exist in China." Through such contacts the Indian masses may get a chance to know what Communism is, and reject it, not out of fear or ignorance, but from a cultural and patriotic point of view.

Some reporters have given the impression that the recent visit of Messrs. Khrushchev and Bulganin to India was a kind of inspection tour before the final "take-over." The fact is that Nehru had at stake the Communist party in India. Though they are numerically insignificant, Nehru is more afraid of the Communists than of any other opposition party in the country. In the early years they had accused him of being an "under-dog" of the Anglo-Americans, as the Russians had accused Gandhi of being a "reactionary." They promised to bridge the gap between the maharaja and the outcaste. "From each one according to his means, to each one according to his needs," was their catch-phrase. Nehru took his time. He drew up a democratic constitution, and next put forward the theory of "a Socialistic pattern of society" which would aim at redressing all social injustice. The Communists were even more deflated by Nehru's next move. He took the offensive and journeyed to China, Yugoslavia and, finally, to Russia. He invited Communist leaders, one by one, to visit India. Such tactics have left the Indian Communists baffled. They can neither oppose nor agree with him. The next election should prove how successful or how dangerous Nehru's strategy has been.

It is interesting to note, in this connection, that for all the welcome given Khrushchev and Bulganin, they were zealously kept out of two important states of the Indian Union, the Red-affected Andhra and Kerala. Apart from their official welcome at New Delhi, the only time Nehru "obliged" his guests by being personally present was at their Calcutta reception. It so happens that Calcutta is India's Communist stronghold; here Nehru made his strong "ideological" speech.

THE STORY of India's struggle for freedom, led by Gandhi and Nehru, further shows Nehru's ideological "orthodoxy." That struggle ran parallel to the October Revolution and the rising Communist regime in Russia. Despite Nehru's visit to the Soviet Union in the thirties, he neither preached nor encouraged violence, even against a foreign rule. On the contrary, as occasion offered, he reproved it, and set an example of non-violence by electing prison life nine times for a total of thirteen years. Before and during the second world war Germany, Italy and Japan, anxious to add to the strain of the Allies, had hoped Nehru would lead a revolution against Britain. Yet Nehru refused even so much as an interview with either Hitler or Mussolini. If he abhorred totalitarianism for itself, and did not seek its help even for India's liberation, he would hardly approve it when he is himself the master of the house.

If the economic philosophy of a country is any indication of its political philosophy, we have a sufficient indication of where Nehru stands. The liquidation of the maharajas and the landlords is a good example. Communists and Socialists demanded confiscation without compensation. "Do right ends justify wrong means?" Nehru asked his critics. "We had decided long ago that no end for which wrong means

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were employed could be right." And just compensation was given, some to the tune of two and one half million dollars a year, in a country where the per capita income is only fifty-eight dollars per annum.

Even in the "Socialistic pattern of society" which Nehru envisages, private enterprise is not eliminated, but limited, not from a socialist principle, i.e., with the intention of depriving the individual of property, but solely because of some practical difficulty. Nehru wants to save time and resources. The man in the village should benefit as soon as possible from the new freedom he is supposed to have gained, lest he should be fooled by the easy promises of the Socialists and Communists. Besides, the China-solution has to be proved false too. Private enterprise in India lacks experience, ability, resources to achieve so much in so short a time. There is wisdom in Nehru's attitude: "If private enterprise is allowed full play, one of the first casualties in India will be private enterprise itself."

The same realism is apparent in Nehru's attitude toward external "aid," which becomes intelligible in view of the "new life" in Asia. He is not prepared to buy his policy nor to sell it. This applies also to the trade agreement with Soviet Russia. The help from Russia is only in steel, not Communism; it is Russia's money that is used, not her economic theory. Besides, Nehru knows well enough Lenin's peace-time offensive: "Disarm your enemy in peace-time by diplomacy and trade." Mikoyan all but repeated these words last March in New Delhi. He said: "Certain aggressive circles have as their slogan, 'Let us arm,' but we say, 'Let us trade.'" Nehru's friendship with Communist regimes is possible because he feels he can still keep Communism out of India and baffle the Communists who are inside.

To hold, therefore, that because Nehru criticizes the armed alliances of the West, and because he is friendly with Communist regimes, he is a Communist-fellow-traveller, is to misunderstand the significance of Nehru's neutrality. It would fail, if the West distrusts India's motives and thus unconsciously drives her to the opposite camp. From Nehru's point of view, war and preparation for war can only distract the nation's attention from the more urgent problem of economic reconstruction. Another war would mean postponement of India's economic recovery and would provide the enemies of Democracy enough time to sow dissension. Nehru's sole effort is to make "India run before she can walk"—economically. As it is, he still proves to the masses that there is a better way than the China-way, although it means non-alignment and neutrality. And to these three hundred and sixty-four million people, Nehru's solution means just that: the answer to their aspiration to a better future of equality and Democracy. And to the free world, too, it should mean just that: the heroic attempt of a brave man to keep one seventh of humanity out of the reach of the New Leviathan, or, to borrow a phrase from Nehru himself, the effort to wipe out every tear from every eye without breaking any heads.

EPICTETUS OR THE PSALMS?

Stoicism in the South

WALKER PERCY

IT IS ALWAYS hard to generalize about the South, harder perhaps for the Southerner, for whom the subject is living men, himself among them, than for the Northerner who, in proportion to his detachment, can the more easily deal with ideas. Yet I think it is possible to record at first hand a momentous change which has taken place in a single generation—and I do not mean the obvious changes, the New South of the magazines, the Negro emigration or the Supreme Court decision. The change is this: until a few years ago the champion of Negro rights in the South, and of fairmindedness and toleration in general, was the upper-class white Southerner. He is their champion no longer. He has, by and large, unshouldered his burden for someone else to pick up. What has happened to him? With a few courageous exceptions, he is either silent or he is leading the Citizens' Councils.

He will not deny the charge but will reply that it is not he who has changed but the Supreme Court, that he is still fighting to preserve the same way of life he defended when he opposed the Klan thirty years ago. Has not pressure from the North rendered the moderate position untenable? Is he not

Mr. Percy is himself a resident in the South. This is his first article in The Commonweal.

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now fighting the same good fight as his fathers, who kicked out the scalawags and carpetbaggers and rescued the South from one of the most shameful occupations in history?

But it is not the same fight and he has changed. (Again let me say I only feel free to say this because no white Southerner can write a *j'accuse* without making a *mea culpa;* no more is the average Northerner, either by the accident of his historical position or by his present performance, entitled to a feeling of moral superiority.)

The fact is that neither the ethos nor the traditional world-view of the upper-class white Southerner is any longer adequate to the situation. No longer able to maintain a steadfast and temperate position, he finds himself caught up in violent and even contradictory crossmovements. There is nothing atypical about Faulkner's crying the South's guilt to the high heavens one moment and the next condoning street fighting to perpetuate it. The old alliance of Negro and white gentry has broken up. During the last gubernatorial primary in Louisiana an extraordinary thing happened, the significance of which has been largely missed. The considerable Negro vote went *en bloc* to its traditional enemy, the poor-white candidate.

What is the reason for this dissolution of the old alliance? Is it simply a result of the Decision, or does the cause lie much deeper? Does it not, in fact, reflect a profound cultural change which, as it has turned out, cannot be accommodated within the ethos of the upper-class white?

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THE GREATNESS of the South, like the greatness of the English squirearchy, had always a stronger Greek flavor than it ever had a Christian. Its nobility and graciousness was the nobility and graciousness of the old Stoa. How immediately we recognize the best of the South in the words of the Emperor: "Every moment think steadily, as a Roman and a man, to do what thou hast in hand with perfect and simple dignity, and a feeling of affection, and freedom, and justice." And how curiously foreign to the South sound the Decalogue, the Beatitudes, the doctrine of the Mystical Body. The South's virtues were the broadsword virtues of the clan, as were her vices too—the hubris of *noblesse* gone arrogant. The Southern gentleman did live in a Christian edifice, but he lived there in the strange fashion Chesterton spoke of, that of a man who will neither go inside nor put it entirely behind him but stands forever grumbling on the porch. From this vantage point he caught sight of Pericles and Hector and the Emperor, and recognized them as his heart's elect. Where was to be found their like? in Abraham? in Paul? He thought not. When he named a city Corinth, he did not mean Paul's community. How like him to go into Chancellorsville or the Argonne with Epictetus in his pocket; how unlike him to have had the Psalms.

It is true that he was raised on the Christian chivalry of Walter Scott, but it was a Christianity which was estheticized by medieval trappings and a chivalry which was abstracted from its sacramental setting. If *Ivanhoe* and *The Talisman* were his favorite novels, Richard Coeur de Lion and Saladin were his favorite characters, just because in them great-heartedness and soldierly generosity transcended everything, even religious differences.

If the Stoic way was remarkably suited to the Empire of the first century, it was quite as remarkably suited to the agrarian South of the last century. The Colonel Sartoris who made himself responsible for his helpless "freedmen," and the Lucas Beauchamps who accepted his leadership, formed between them a bond such as can only exist between one man in his dignity and another. It was a far nobler relationship than what usually passes under the name of paternalism. The nobility of Sartoris—and there were a great many Sartorises—was the nobility of the natural perfection of the Stoics, the stern inner summons to man's full estate, to duty, to honor, to generosity toward his fellowmen and above all to his inferiors—not because they were made in the image of God and were therefore lovable in themselves, but because to do them an injustice would be to defile the inner fortress which was oneself. Whatever its abuses, whatever its final sentimental decay, there was such a thing as *noblesse oblige* on the one side and an extraordinary native courtesy and dignity on the other, by which there occurred, under almost impossible conditions, a flowering of human individuality such as this hemisphere has rarely seen.

Yet, like the Stoa of the Empire, the Stoa of the South was based on a particular hierarchical structure and could not survive the change. Nor did it wish to survive. Its most characteristic mood was a poetic pessimism which took a grim satisfaction in the dissolution of its values—because social decay confirmed one in his original choice of the wintry kingdom of self. He is never more himself than when in a twilight victory of evil, of Modred over Arthur. And of course he is in good company in his assessment of the modern world. It is not just Faulkner who bears witness to the coming of the mass man, to the alienation and vulgarization of the urban consumer. Ortega and Marcel are neither Southern nor Stoic.

The difference is that for the Southern Stoic the day has been lost and lost for good. It seems to him that the Snopes have won, not only the white Snopes but the black Snopes as well: the white man has lost his *oblige,* the black man has lost his manners, and insolence prevails. For Southern society was above

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all a society of manners, an incredible triumph of manners, and a twilight of manners seems a twilight of the world. For the Stoic there is no real hope. His finest hour is to sit tight-lipped and ironic while the world comes crashing down around him.

It must be otherwise with the Christian. The urban plebs is not the mass which is to be abandoned to its own barbaric devices, but the lump to be leavened. The Christian is optimistic precisely where the Stoic is pessimistic. What the Stoic sees as the insolence of his former charge—and this is what he can't tolerate, the Negro's demanding his rights instead of being thankful for the squire's generosity—is in the Christian scheme the sacred right which must be accorded the individual, whether deemed insolent or not. For it was not the individual, after all, who was intrinsically precious in the Stoic view—rather it was one's own attitude toward him, and this could not fail to be specified by the other's good manners or lack of them. If he became insolent, very well: let him taste the bitter fruits of his insolence. The Stoic has no use for the clamoring minority; the Christian must have every use for it.

WE IN THE South can no longer afford the luxury of maintaining the Stoa beside the Christian edifice. In the past we managed the remarkable feat of keeping both, one for living in, the other for dying in. But the Church is no longer content to perform rites of passage; she has entered the arena of the living and must be reckoned with. The white Southerner, Catholic and Protestant, has been invited either to go inside the edifice he has built or to consider what he is doing on the porch at all.

Unfortunately, the Catholic laity of the South have not yet realized this. Rather it is, to some extent, the other way round—Catholics have absorbed the local prejudices of the community. Two days before last Good Friday, a membership blank appeared in the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* inviting "Roman Catholics of the Caucasian Race" to join an "Association of Catholic Laymen" for the purpose of "investigating and studying the problems of compulsory integration; to seek out, make known and denounce Communist infiltration, if there be any, in the integration movement," etc. "Roman Catholics of the Caucasian Race"—what a tragic distortion to connect the word Catholic with the miserable euphemism of the Sugar Bowl ticket: "for members of the Caucasian race only." Archbishop Rummel's pastoral letter of February 19 is a hard saying for Louisiana Catholics. No one yet knows what their final reaction will be; there is evidence both of loyalty to and disaffection from this luminous message of Christian charity. Here again the upper-class white Catholic has not distinguished himself. The truth is that the Catholic Church and the twentieth century have caught up with the white Catholics of the South. They can no longer afford the luxury of Creole Catholicism à la Lafcadio Hearn, of Tante Marie going to daily Mass at the Cathedral on a segregated streetcar and seeing God's will in it.

The Stoic-Christian Southerner is offended when the Archbishop of New Orleans calls segregation sinful (or discusses the rights of labor). He cannot help feeling that religion is overstepping its allotted area of morality. In the comfortable *modus vivendi* of the past, he had been willing enough to allow Christianity a certain say-so on the subject of sin—by which he understood misbehavior in sexual matters, or in drinking and gambling. He is therefore confused and obscurely outraged when Christian teaching is applied to social questions. It is as if a gentleman's agreement had been broken. He does not want the argument on these grounds, but prefers to talk about a "way of life," "state's rights," and legal precedents, or to murmur about Communism, left-wing elements and infiltration.

Yet eventually he must come to terms with his own Christian heritage. So far Archbishop Rummel has been answered only by having his named booed by the Citizens' Council and by having a cross burned in his front yard. The secular press is silent; the Sartorises are silent if they are not booing; many of his Protestant colleagues are silent; more sadly, his own flock wavers. But sooner or later the Archbishop must be answered. And the good pagan's answer is no longer good enough for the South.

ELEGY

A bird sings of a lady; sings
A story without merriment:
Of death, a lady and her love,
Her cerecloth and her cerement.

Sing, woeful bird, sing lovely, oh!
Mourn well the lady's funeral.
She loved a man and tried his strength.
He weeps not at her burial.

Now sing, now sing; she would have loved
With kisses incorporeal;
She would have built, and tower high,
A love untouched, marmoreal.

Ah lark, oh thrush; what bird shall sing,
Or jackdaw tell, or cardinal,
What killed their love . . . her lover knows
And weeps not at her funeral.

LEONARD WOLF.

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Teaching the Teachers

DONALD McDONALD

IN SEPTEMBER, 1951, Pope Pius XII gave an address to the First International Congress of Teaching Sisters in Rome. A year later, he gave another address to a meeting of superiors general of women's Religious communities in Rome. These two talks have inspired what seems to be one of the most significant developments in Catholic education in the United States in this century. The history to date of this development, the organization of the Sister-Formation Conference, is contained in a new book, *The Mind of the Church in the Formation of Sisters* (Fordham University Press, N.Y. $3).

Two passages from these Papal addresses have provided the spark for the Sister-Formation Conference. The first passage is from the 1951 address:

"Many of your schools are praised and described to us as very good—but not all. It is our fervent wish that all strive to become excellent. This presupposes that your teaching Sisters are masters of the subjects they expound. See to it, therefore, that they are well trained, and that their education corresponds in quality and academic degrees to that demanded by the State. Be generous in giving them all they need, especially where books are concerned, so that they may continue their studies and thus offer young people a rich and solid harvest of knowledge. This is in keeping with the Catholic idea which gratefully welcomes all that is naturally good, beautiful and true because it is an image of the Divine goodness, beauty and truth. Most parents entrust their daughters to you because their consciences bid them do so. But this does not mean that the children should suffer by receiving in your schools an education of inferior value. On the contrary, you must do all that you can to assure parents that their children are getting the best education from the very elementary classes on. And then, do not forget that knowledge and good teaching win the respect and consideration of the pupil for the teaching Sister. Thus she can exercise greater influence on their character and spiritual life."

The second passage is from the Pope's 1952 address:

"*The formation of your Sisters for the task incumbent upon them*: Here let there be no parsimony; take a broad and generous view. Be it a question of education, pedagogy, the care of the sick, artistic or other activities—the Sister should entertain the conviction: 'My superior is making possible for me a formation that will put me on equal footing with my colleagues in the world.' Make it possible for them and give them the means to keep their professional knowledge and training up to date. On this point we have also elaborated during the past year. We repeat it in order to underscore the importance of this requirement for the interior peace and for the work of your Sisters."

THE PRACTICAL significance of these two directives can be measured, indeed the goals they point to can be achieved, only if the present condition of Sister-training is understood. Enter the Sister-Formation Conference which has undertaken the vital, often delicate, work of determining the actual status of the Sisters' training program, both pre-service and in-service, in this country.

The Conference, a member of the College and University Department of the National Catholic Educational Association, began to take shape at the 1952 NCEA convention in Kansas City when the NCEA's Teacher Education section conducted a panel discussion of Pius XII's 1951 address quoted above. In the four years since, the Sister-Formation Conference (formally so named in January, 1954) has worked with quiet and steady purpose. It has accumulated pertinent data concerning the training of the 93,000 teaching Sisters in the United States. It has evoked from bishops, priests, educators and Sister-superiors some of the most intense and reflective thinking about this training program, its inadequacies, the effects of the inadequacies and the possible remedying of a frankly undesirable situation. And, since the Code of Canon Law "includes no special provision with respect to professional formation for teaching Sisters," the Conference has devoted a substantial part of its time to a study of the Code's prescriptions for religious clerics and seminarians in an effort to develop a set of guiding principles and norms for women Religious.

The Conference publishes a quarterly *Bulletin* with a circulation of twenty-eight hundred going into every state in the Union and fourteen foreign countries. It is carefully read (and contributed to) by members of the hierarchy, Sister-superiors and Mothers-General,

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priests and educators in charge of the education of Sisters, novice-mistresses and others concerned with Catholic education and the formation of Sisters. The *Bulletin* is edited by Sister Ritamary, C.H.M., of Marycrest College, who has also edited the compilation of papers, documents and addresses making up the present book. All of the literature in this 280-page compilation has been developed within the past two years in regional and national meetings sponsored by the Conference throughout the country.

THE ULTIMATE goal of the Sister-Formation Conference is to secure the highest possible spiritual, intellectual and professional formation of Sisters, whether they be teachers, hospital nurses or social service and welfare workers. Wisely, the executive committee of the Conference, headed by Sister Mary Emil, I.H.M., of Marygrove College, has been more concerned with discovering, interpreting and disclosing the objective realities in the present training of teaching Sisters than with indulging in what would be understandable, but profitless, complaining about those realities.

By carefully-worded questionnaires sent to 377 general superiors of the teaching communities in the United States, the Sister-Formation Conference has learned how realistic and how necessary was the emphatic counsel of Pius XII in 1951 and 1952. Though in general the religious communities and Catholic educators agree that a four-year college program leading to a bachelor's degree is "basic," and that a "fifth year" of graduate specialization is ideal for all Sisters before they are assigned to teach in a classroom, only thirteen communities out of the two hundred and fifty-five which responded to the questionnaire had a full bachelor's degree program in operation.

"One hundred and eighteen communities had neither educational facilities of their own for the training of their subjects, nor easy access to those of suitable Catholic colleges and universities," reports Sister Mary Emil in her introduction to the present book. "The figures showed indisputably," she writes, "that there are in almost every religious congregation a very large number of in-service teachers who must strive through a period of from ten to twenty years of summer schools to attain what is now recognized as minimum preparation for their work. It also seems clear that the bulk of American Sisters entering the convent without college training have been educated in this way."

Let us concretize this just a bit. A young girl, in her senior year in high school, discovers she has a vocation to the Religious life, a most fateful decision. She applies, she is accepted, she becomes a novice and begins to acquire her spiritual formation in her first year in her community's novitiate. At the end of her novitiate year, she begins her juniorate which, since she is to be given ultimately the serious and complex and demanding assignment of teaching, ought to be the time when she begins a four-year college course to prepare herself for this exacting work. Her community, beset by intense and incessant demands for more teaching Sisters to staff new and/or enlarged Catholic schools, does indeed send her into a classroom, not as a student, but as a teacher. And the classroom may have as few as thirty or thirty-five children but, more likely, it will be bulging with fifty-five, sixty or seventy youngsters.

For the next fourteen or fifteen years, this young Sister will teach for nine months out of each year, in addition to carrying out her other duties, community prayer, domestic tasks in the convent, extra-curricular activities with the students. Summers furnish no opportunity for her to re-group and re-invigorate her energies. At least half of her summer will be spent on the hot campus of some metropolitan Catholic university, earning six or eight credits towards the bachelor's degree she should have received before she faced her first class of students. What time is left in the summer is usually consumed by assignments, teaching catechism in rural religious vacation schools and making the annual spiritual retreat. Invariably, it seems, there is just enough time left to re-open the convent and get the classrooms in shape for the next class of youngsters which will be just as large, if not larger, than the last class.

Aside from the educational problems caused by stretching a four-year college program over a fourteen-year period of intellectually discontinuous summer sessions, we are faced here, not with a question of the limits of a Sister's sacrifice and generosity, but rather with a question of justice. Is it just to the teaching Sister? to the children in her charge? to the parents who have delegated to her their teaching authority?

Bishop Charles P. Greco of Alexandria, Louisiana, has said that an untrained Sister in a classroom is a "liability to herself, to the pupil, the school, the community, to the Church." Bishop Joseph M. Marling of Kansas City sees the parochial school situation as "critical"; "those who defend mediocrity in the natural order, even in the name of supernatural striving or supernatural achievement, neither speak nor act the mind of the Church," he says.

Everybody, if we may judge from the contents of this book, agrees that "something must be done" if teaching Sisters are to be "put on an equal (intellectual and professional) footing with (their) colleagues in the world."

If effective action is to be taken about present conditions, Sister-superiors point out that more lay teachers will have to be hired, first to relieve the immediate

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pressure for Sisters if the four-year bachelor's program becomes a universal, unexceptionable standard, and, second, to offset what seems to be a more or less permanent "shortage" of teaching Sisters. In this respect, a Conference survey, still incomplete, of fourteen thousand young women in Catholic high schools, colleges and nursing schools regarding their attitudes towards the Sisters may well disclose a causal relationship between an inexperienced, harassed and overworked Sister and the negative effect such a Sister will involuntarily exert on young girls considering the possibility of entering the Religious life.

The Sister-superiors and others also point out that the financial condition of the teaching communities makes it almost impossible for them to give their members adequate education. Summarizing the results of a questionnaire, Sister Mary Emil writes: "Because Sisters' stipends had failed utterly to keep up with inflation, the communities were struggling to meet greatly increased educational costs on an income greatly reduced in its purchasing power. It was evident that the salaries of the Sisters teaching in the parochial schools were in some cases less than the cost of living for the same Sisters, and were in no case anything like adequate to cover the expense of educating the young Sisters and of maintaining the retired and infirm."

Partial corrections of this situation are already in effect in at least one archdiocese, New York. Monsignor John J. Voight, secretary of education for the archdiocese, describes the "Diocesan Subsidy Plan" under which the archdiocese pays sixty per cent of the tuition costs of any Sister or Brother teaching in the diocesan elementary schools and enrolling at Fordham in courses leading to the Bachelor of Science degree in education. More than thirty-five hundred Sisters and Brothers have benefited from this program since 1952; and the various Religious communities have been saved $100,000.

Archbishop Thomas A. Connolly of Seattle says there must be "an ample increase in salary over what is now paid to the teaching Sister." He says, further, that the hardship on parochial schools of not receiving teaching Sisters until they are adequately prepared will be "acute but temporary." If the bachelor's program is universally adopted, the flow of Sisters into the classrooms will resume four years from now and be uninterrupted thereafter. Bishop Greco makes the same observation.

Further proposals regarding a type of curriculum which will integrate and nourish both the spiritual and intellectual life of future teaching Sisters will be forthcoming. The Sister-Formation Conference recently received a grant of $50,000 from the Fund for the Advancement of Education to finance a three-month, data-gathering study by sixteen Sisters this summer. Objective: to accumulate background material for the "construction of an ideal curriculum in Sister education." This material will form the subject matter for the Conference's 1956-57 series of regional meetings.

ALL THIS adds up to a wonderful beginning. Yet the decisive chapter in the astonishing history of the Sister-Formation movement has yet to be written. One cannot read *The Mind of the Church in the Formation of Sisters* without becoming optimistic about how that chapter will read.

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, largest teaching community in the United States, has already adopted the four-year bachelor's degree program for all its incoming Sisters who will teach. Thirty-three per cent of the communities visited by Conference representatives have introduced lengthened pre-service training programs; eighteen per cent are planning a lengthened program; and thirty-six per cent have signified their desire to improve their pre-service training but are wondering how they can do it in view of limited financial and accessible educational resources. In the first year of regional Sister-Formation Conference meetings, two hundred and forty-six communities were represented and one hundred and seventy Sister-superiors participated; last year, three hundred and six communities were represented and two hundred and ten Sister-superiors participated.

What Sister Mary Emil calls an "apostolic solidarity" has been manifest from the start of this movement. Religious communities of both men and women, members of the hierarchy, deans of Catholic graduate schools, presidents of colleges and universities, diocesan and archdiocesan superintendents of schools—all have cooperated with the Conference in giving shape, direction and depth to this profound movement. Valerio Cardinal Valeri, prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Religious in Rome, has expressed his enthusiasm for it, as has Archbishop Amleto Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate to the United States.

The spontaneity and unanimity of response to the Sister-Formation movement is itself impressive evidence that a "critical situation" in American Catholic education does exist. And the fact that the Sisters themselves have not wasted their time and energy lamenting over what has been; the fact that they have coolly and with precision fixed their sights on what must be; the fact that they have been so mercilessly candid in searching out and openly discussing the gaping holes in both their pre-service and in-service formation (running the inescapable risk of having their data misunderstood or misinterpreted)—all of these facts will not, we may be confident, go unnoticed by those who have the power, authority and responsibility to resolve this "critical situation" in favor of the teaching Sisters and the Catholic educational system in the United States.

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THE SCREEN

NO SAD SONGS FOR ME

EDDY DUCHIN probably did have more ups and downs in his life than most people, but I doubt if his life was quite the soap opera the movies have made of it. However, as produced by Jerry Wald, "The Eddy Duchin Story" is such a high quality soap opera—refined, well-acted, its CinemaScopic Technicolor and nice tinkly music of the two decades after 1927 attractive to eye and ear—that I found it engrossing from beginning to end.

Tyrone Power is excellent in the role of the pianist who won the attention of the fashionable set, rose to fame and traveled far and wide with his own orchestra; he has captured Duchin's personal charm at the piano, as well as the pianist's style and fingering, and the piano recordings, done by Carmen Cavallaro, are first-rate. Kim Novak never looked lovelier than she does as the well-heeled Marjorie Oelrichs, who helps Eddy with his career and with High Society. Their love and devotion and happy marriage end sadly when she dies after giving birth to their first child—a boy whom Eddy leaves with his wealthy in-laws (Shepperd Strudwick, Frieda Inescort) and neglects shamefully. Touring with his orchestra, and later fighting in the Navy in World War II, Eddy continues to mourn his beloved Marjorie through the years and bitterly resents her death and his son. Eventually, of course, come those touching getting-to-know-you scenes between father and son—cold at first, but gradually getting warmer as music unites them. Also helpful is the girl (played by attractive newcomer Victoria Shaw) who lives with the in-laws and who has been mothering little Peter Duchin (Rex Thompson). Reluctantly, Eddy falls in love with her, and they are happily married, although he is already suffering from leukemia and has only a year to live. Then Peter must be told of his father's impending death.

Obviously, scriptwriter Samuel Taylor had some pretty sticky material to handle here, and most of it he has handled in a pretty sticky manner. But Director George Sidney (except for the finale which is meant to tear our hearts out with its schmaltzy scene showing Eddy and Peter playing on two pianos until the camera concentrates on Peter playing alone) succeeds in keeping "The Eddy Duchin Story" from going on a long crying jag and avoids the pitfalls that made "The Benny Goodman Story" so dull.

I WAS very leery about "That Certain Feeling" when it was announced that Bob Hope would take over the role of the young cartoonist which had been done so charmingly by Jackie Cooper in the stage version called "The King of Hearts." This original light comedy, by Jean Kerr and Eleanor Brooke, was chockfull of hilarious lines (some of which have been dropped by the movie) and amusing situations involving a young man who gets sick to his stomach whenever he shows any aggression, a secretary, and their boss, a cartoonist who's grown stuffy and now takes himself very seriously. But producers-directors Norman Frank and Melvin Panama, who also wrote the movie script with some outside help, have refashioned all this for the particular talents of their star—and the results are still very funny. Bob Hope has already perfected the role of the underdog, so this story about a boobie with a heart of gold and a psychosomatic stomach is a natural for him. His timing with lines is excellent, and he has some good people to help toss them around: Eva Marie Saint as his ex-wife is not only attractive but exhibits quite a flair for comedy, especially when she romps through a drunk scene; George Sanders, as the egotistical boss who hopes to make Eva wife No. 4, hires Bob to ghost-draw his ailing cartoon strip, and is adopting an orphan only for publicity reasons; Pearl Bailey as George's housekeeper tells us some of the story (for no reason at all) and adds to the excitement and fun when she's determined that Bob and Eva should get together again; Jerry Mathers is the youngster who comes to this mad ménage and becomes as attached to Hope as he is to the big dog described by Pearl as a cross between a camel and raccoon coat. Some of the scenes are pushed a little hard and long for laughs, but most of them win chuckles quite easily.

EVERY NOW and then a foreign film comes along that wins critical huzzahs mainly because it is an import. If "Rififi" had been made in the United States, it would have been properly sat on for its immorality and decadence. Although it has a crime-does-not-pay ending, it glamorizes criminals much in the manner of Mickey Spillane, and it goes out of its way to win you to its unwholesome characters. But having been made in France and handsomely photographed in black-and-white and expertly directed by Jules Dassin, who desperately strains for and achieves realism, "Rififi" is being touted as if these assets were enough to make a great movie. Great stress is laid on the effectiveness of the cleverly directed, 35-minute robbery scene in which no dialogue or music is heard. It is true that this episode and others are effective and well-acted, but so far discussions of the picture have said little about its unhealthy aura. Surely a movie's meaning, even a French one, is more important than its technique and execution.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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OF NOTE

LITERATURE AND CENSORSHIP

IN AN ADDRESS delivered on the seventeenth anniversary of the Thomas More Association, the Reverend J. Courtney Murray, S.J., discussed certain problems of censorship. His full address is contained in the June-July issue of *Books on Trial* (210 W. Madison Street, Chicago 6, Illinois. $3 a year). Excerpts from it are given below:

The issue that is central in the whole problem [of censorship] is the issue of social freedom. More exactly, it is the issue of striking a right balance between freedom and restraint in society. This is the most difficult problem of social science, to such an extent that all other difficulties are reducible to this one. No complete discussion is possible here; I shall simply make certain assertions, general in themselves, but relevant to our special problem.

First, in society constraint must be for the sake of freedom. It seems a paradox to assert that the imposition of a constraint must be justified by an increase in freedom, since every constraint is a decrease of freedom. What I mean, however, is that the constraint must create a freedom in another respect. . . .

The problem of constraint for the sake of freedom is difficult enough when it is only a question of organizing the material conditions of life. But it becomes even more inextricable when it is a question of organizing communications within society; for in this field religious and moral, intellectual and emotional values come into play. It is easy enough to see that the "press" (understood to mean all the media of communication) can be the vehicle both of corruptive and of beneficial influences. It is easy enough to say that corruptive influences ought to be put under reasonable restraints. . . .

However, when you have made your case against these influences as socially corruptive, you have only reached the threshold of the problem of social freedom. Many questions remain. For instance, when and under what circumstances do these influences become so corruptive that they require animadvertance by organized society itself? (It is presumed that the first solicitations of corruptive influences are resisted by the special resources of the family and the Church.) Again, what agencies are to be enlisted against these influences—the public agencies of government and law, or the private agencies known as voluntary associations? Either or both? And to what extent each? Above all, what is the norm whose requirements are to be enforced, in one way or another, against influences that are corruptive? It is, of course, the norm of public order. But what requirements of public order can be made valid against the claims of freedom?

Even supposing these questions to have been satisfactorily answered, a further complicating consideration remains. The fact is that the imposition of constraints, the limitation of freedom, has consequences. They are numerous; but two require special notice.

First, if you impose a constraint on freedom in one domain, in order to increase freedom in another, you may take the risk of damaging freedom in a third domain, with consequences more dangerous to the community. Social freedom is a complex, whose constituent elements are closely interlocked. You may, for instance, wish to "clean up" political campaigns by limiting the freedom of the contestants to attack each other's personal integrity; but the means you take to this end may damage the freedom of the electoral process itself. Every constraint has multiple effects; it may impose restraints on a freedom which you would wish to see untouched.

There is, secondly, a consequent consideration. Because social freedoms interlock so tightly, it is not possible to know antecedently what the multiple effects of a regulation will be. At best, the effect you want can only be foreseen with probability, not certainty. And unforeseen effects may follow, with the result that a regulation, in itself sensible, may in the end do more harm than good. . . .

Considerations such as these would seem to indicate that the problem of social freedom is insoluble, if by solution is meant a simple formula that is applicable to all cases and similar for all countries. However, a community can do one important thing: it can decide on the general orientation it wishes to give to its particular solution. We have done this in the United States. We have constitutionally decided that the presumption is in favor of freedom and that the advocate of constraint must make a convincing argument for its necessity or utility in the particular case. . . .

After this brief discussion of the central issue involved in censorship I come to my proposition. It may be briefly stated thus: censorship in the civil order must be a juridical process. In using the word "juridical" I mean that the premises and objectives of the program should be defined in accord with the norms of good jurisprudence; that the forms of procedure should be properly judicial; and that the structure and workings of the process should be sustained by the consent of the community. I should maintain that this concept of a juridical process should be verified, *mutatis mutandis,* in every form of censorship, whether governmental or non-governmental.

Censorship exercised by public authority is obliged to be literally juridical, in the sense described. As a legal process this censorship is controlled by the canons of necessity or utility for the common good.

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That some degree of punitive censorship is necessary is sufficiently evident. Pornography, for instance, the kind of obscenity that is a perverse and vicious profanation of the sacredness of sex, seems to hold a permanent attraction for a portion of humanity. That it is a corruptive social influence is not to be denied; consequently, few would deny that its repression is necessary. Beyond this, how much more censorship is useful, and how useful is it? That seems to be the central question.

A preliminary answer is furnished by the principle, basic to jurisprudence, that morals and law are differentiated in character, and not coextensive in their functions. It is not the function of the legislator to forbid everything that the moral law forbids, or to enjoin everything that the moral law enjoins. The moral law governs the entire order of human conduct, personal and social; it extends even to motivations and interior acts. Law, on the other hand, looks only to the public order of human society; it touches only external acts, and regards only values that are formally social. For this reason the scope of law is limited. Moreover, though law is indeed a moral force, directive of human society to the common good, it relies ultimately for its observance on coercion. And men can be coerced only into a minimal amount of moral action. Again from this point of view the scope of law is limited.

Therefore the moral aspirations of law are minimal. Law seeks to establish and maintain only that minimum of actualized morality that is necessary for the healthy functioning of the social order. It does not look to what is morally desirable, or attempt to remove every moral taint from the atmosphere of society. It enforces only what is minimally acceptable, and in this sense socially necessary. Beyond this, society must look to other institutions for the elevation and maintenance of its moral standards—that is, to the Church, the home, the school, and the whole network of voluntary associations that concern themselves with public morality in one or other aspect. . . .

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It is, in fact, the differentiated character of law and morals that justifies the lawyer or judge when he insists that punitive censorship statutes should be clearly drawn, with the margin of uncertainty as narrow as possible.

The net of all this is that no society should expect very much in the way of moral uplift from its censorship statutes. Indeed the whole criminal code is only a minimal moral force. Particularly in the field of sexual morality the expectations are small; as I have suggested, they are smaller here than anywhere else. It is a sort of paradox, though an understandable one, that the greater the social evil, the less effective against it is the instrument of coercive law. . . .

The problem of popular consent to the order of law and to its manifold coercions becomes critical in a pluralist society such as ours. Basic religious divisions lead to a conflict of moral views; certain asserted "rights" clash with other "rights" no less strongly asserted. And the divergences are often irreducible. Nevertheless, despite all the pluralism, some manner of consensus must support the order of law to which the whole community and all its groups are commonly subject. This consensus must include, in addition to other agreements, an agreement on certain rules which regulate the relations of the divergent groups among one another, and their common relation to the order of law. In what concerns our present subject of censorship, I suggest that there are four such rules. Before stating them I would note that in the United States at present all the religious groups are—from the sociological, even if not from the statistical, point of view—minority groups.

First, within the larger pluralist society each minority group has the right to censor for its own members, if it so chooses, the content of the various media of communication, and to protect them, by means of its own choosing, from materials considered harmful according to its own standards.

Second, in a pluralist society no minority group has the right to demand that government should impose a general censorship, affecting all the citizenry, upon any medium of communication, with a view to punishing the communication of materials that are judged to be harmful according to the special standards held within one group.

Third, any minority group has the right to work toward the elevation of standards of public morality in the pluralistic society, through the use of the methods of persuasion and pacific argument.

Fourth, in a pluralist society no minority group has the right to impose its own religious or moral views on other groups, through the use of the methods of force, coercion, or violence. . . . The statement of these rules leads to the next subject.

In the United States there are a multitude of volun-

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tary agencies which exercise some measures of surveillance, judgment, and even control of various media of communication. . . . With regard to these agencies I should maintain the general proposition stated above—that their censoring should also be a juridical process, if not literally, certainly in spirit.

The juridical premise of their action is not in doubt. In the United States it is generally acknowledged that the voluntary association is entitled to concern itself actively with matters that relate to the public welfare. It is invidious to stigmatize all such associations as "pressure-groups," pursuing "private interests." The fact is that, in their own way, they can perform a public function.

The more difficult question concerns the methods used by these associations or committees. There can be no slightest quarrel when they use simply the methods of persuasion; that is, when they appeal for voluntary cooperation on the grounds of a common moral and social responsibility. Thus, for instance, many associations interested in decent literature and movies (surely a public interest) seek the responsible cooperation of producers and theater-owners, of publishers and distributors, with a view at least to diminishing the volume of obscenity, or other objectionable features, in these media. Surely here all is entirely rightful and prudent.

Other methods—at the other end of the spectrum, so to speak—seem to have at least the appearance of coercion. As an example one might take the organized boycott, against a merchant, a theater, etc. It is a sort of "consumers' strike"; it is sometimes accompanied by picketing; it normally involves some form of economic sanctions invoked against the offending party. What is to be thought of such methods?

It will be agreed that the use of formal coercion in society is reserved to public authority and its agencies of law. Coercion of a more informal kind—through economic pressures, etc.—is also employed by various associations that do not hesitate to identify themselves as "power-groups." Such, for instance, is a trade union. It does indeed seem a bit incongruous that other types of voluntary association, concerned with values that are spiritual and moral, aesthetic and cultural, should pursue their ends by what appear to be the methods of power rather than of persuasion. On the other hand, it is not possible to prove the position, taken by some, that an action like the boycott of a moving-picture is somehow "unrightful," or "unconstitutional," or "undemocratic.". . . .

This said, against the doctrinaire, it remains true that methods of action which verge upon the coercive exhibit some incongruity when used by citizen-groups in the interests of morality in literature or on the screen. Even if they raise no issue of abstract right, they do raise the concrete issue of prudence, which, equally with justice, is one of the cardinal virtues. The issue rises most sharply in the case of Catholic associations. The chief danger is lest the Church itself be identified in the public mind as a power-association. The identification is injurious; it turns into a hatred of the faith. And it has the disastrous effect of obscuring from the public view the true visage of the Church as God's kingdom of truth and freedom, justice and love. . . .

It should be noted too that prudence is an intellectual virtue, a refinement of intelligence. It may therefore properly be asked, how intelligent is it to have recourse to methods that approach coercion in this delicate field of censorship? Few things are worse than to make oneself ridiculous. And when an effort to coerce is made at the dictates of stupidity, the result arouses ridicule as well as resentment.

This brings up the question, who is competent to censor, even in some extra-legal fashion? To say that all censorship should be a juridical process is to say by implication that it ought to be intelligently done. This means close attention to the qualifications of the censor. Here the example of the Church is instructive. In his reform of the discipline of censorship Benedict XIV laid great stress on the rule that the censor is to possess professional competence in the particular field in which he is called upon to pass judgment. . . .

Certainly the ordinary father and mother ought to be qualified to act as censors within the family. And to decide what their children may or may not be prudently exposed to, in the way of reading, movies, etc. But I should not think that the ordinary father or mother, *qua* such, are qualified to act as censor within society at large, or to decide what literature and movies may be displayed before the public. . . .

In one further and final respect, the process of extralegal censorship ought to be juridical, pursued in the spirit of law—that is, in its adoption of minimal aims. Fussiness is out of order. There ought to be a few, only a few, areas of concentration, in which a little bit (if not much) can be done. . . .

It is a good thing to keep our problems in perspective. Our chief problem, of course, is not literary censorship, but literary creation. This is true in the Church. She has no trouble in finding censors; but she prays continually that God may give her men of learning who can write the words that need to be written. The American Catholic community particularly needs to attend seriously to this problem of literary creation. Leo XIII is indeed remembered for his revision of the Index of Forbidden Books. But he was not the first Pope to point to the dangers of reading bad books. It is his great glory that he was the first Pope to say, in substance and effect, in a multitude of discourses, that today there is great danger in not reading good books. . . .

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E. M. Forster's Homage to Another Time

MARIANNE THORNTON. By E. M. Forster. Harcourt, Brace. $5.

By WILLIAM DUNLEA

DESPITE the normal astringency of Mr. Forster, this strikingly illustrated biography is a truly handsome labor of love which must have set him as many hurdles as there are acknowledgments. Mr. Forster, one of the sanest writers alive, thoroughly enjoys himself in this "collaboration" with his great-aunt.

Marianne Thornton ultimately belonged to the Victorian age, but only through infinite refractions could it penetrate to her character, which was born to every enlightenment idea of the previous century that a Christian soul could absorb. But Victorianism alloyed this idealism, and we owe to it the frequently unmanning tolerance of today as an ironically extreme reaction. Nowhere does the biographer lend a Victorian air to his subject; she remained to the last more than three quarters pre-Victorian, but not necessarily behind the times.

Her charming correspondence prevails over her recollections, no doubt because it is, to judge by excerpts of the latter, vastly more interesting from every point of view, including the literary; she is chronicled as daughter, sister, aunt and great-aunt (1797-1887). She was the eldest of nine children to whom the family estate was a "perfect playground and in after years a sacred shrine." They all married except Marianne, and through their considerable progeny bred the name-place confusion that occasionally rears up on all sides of her. This however is not why she dominates her own history so gently, nor is it ascribable to a want of formidable personality; it is because life never called upon her for any extraordinary self-affirmation. Then too, the Thorntons always shouldered life's trials, or what there was of them, stoically; for them duty could harbor no delusion. The only dramatic episodes are a bank failure that threatened to annihilate the family fortune, and the family squabble that alienated Battersea Rise.

The England her biographer knows would have proven inconceivably repellent to Marianne's generation; no less untranslatable to us are the mores of these offspring of Britannia's imperial Iron Age, and one cannot relate that Mr. Forster has made us love the chaste though spirited old lady of stock more provincial than aristocratic; she is only beloved. Her father's generation took the next world for granted, while a genteel stoicism helped them command the best of this. Poverty was feared less than dishonor, nothing exceeded moral comfort; anguish was inadmissible through the benign complacency that would admonish it as selfishness.

Some of her most entertaining letters stem from her early trips to France, a land she dearly loved; certainly the pro-democratic side of her quaint good nature here comes to the fore. On her last visit to Paris she moves back to the same hotel room and sleeps in the same bed she had on her first visit almost forty years before, to "establish the continuity she longed for," and which her very spinsterhood represented.

The chapter "Deceased Wife's Sister" is of key psychological concern, in itself typical material for a Forsterian novel. Here is presented the most affecting evidence of the delicate and large sentiments of her prudent femininity. It also is of social and thus historical importance for limning an extent to which progress does indeed leave pain behind. It was then unlawful for a widower to marry the sister of his dead wife, but the younger Henry would have his way though it meant defying the entire clan, none of whom ever set foot in the family home again. Yet at her last Marianne sends there for some milk, thereby canceling a breach of thirty-five years with her then late brother's second wife.

Mr. Forster commends Miss Thornton for an effortless psychological touch whereby she lightly sketched her religious and moral conclusions. His tribute is well-grounded for her as a social individual, for the soul of her convictions was ever a mellow if sometimes constricted one.

Light, Bright Summer Reading

GUESTWARD HO! By Barbara Hooton and Patrick Dennis. Vanguard. $3.50.

By JOHN P. SISK

AMERICANS apparently never tire of the story of the tenderfoot who leaves his comfortable but artificial city to make a go of it in the wide open spaces where men are men. One reason, obviously, is that such stories repeat an archetypal pattern: historically the American begins as a tenderfoot with the cards stacked against him, yet does quite well for himself. From that point on, any variation on the theme is a natural, especially if the adventure is reported with humor.

Guestward Ho! is not only such a variation but adds the appeal of a do-it-yourself manual. It is the story of a young New York couple, Bill and Barbara Hooton, who go west to operate a dude ranch in the Sante Fe area. It can be recommended as a guide to anyone planning to buy a dude ranch or as a foretaste of joys to come for those who hope to vacation at one.

The Hootons are real tenderfeet and everything happens to them. The cooks bibulously come and go, either there are more employees than guests or the guests arrive as

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the help leaves, the kitchen equipment malfunctions at the most embarrassing times, a lush drives his sport car into the swimming pool, the wrangler runs off with a flashy guest, checks bounce, obnoxious guests make everyone miserable, the host breaks his arm and the first year ends up in the red. Nevertheless, American resourcefulness and energy triumph over all obstacles. When we leave the Hootons midway through their second year they have been tried in the fire of adversity and are clearly on their way.

All this is conveyed in the peppy, wise-cracking style that *The Egg and I* has made ritually necessary for this sort of book. It is the Hooton-Dennis version of mid-century Americanese, which is a dress-up style that so envelops us that we are hardly aware there is a style at all. It is simply the way you address large audiences of Americans when you want them to stop what they are doing and listen.

It is a huckster's style, conditioned by the huckster's suspicion that no one will buy what he wants to sell unless he bamboozles him with a dazzle of language. It is a tense, top-effort style, shot through with the glitter of artificial stage jewelry. It fears nothing so much as unadorned direct statement. With its hyperboles, juxtaposed incongruities and strained figures of speech it sometimes strikes one as a dime-store imitation of the language of the metaphysical poets. Occasionally wonderful things are done in it, but more often than not, in its almost pathological fear of the commonplace, it is facetious and vulgar.

In fairness to Mrs. Hooton and Mr. Dennis, I must say that theirs is not the most extreme version of this style I have seen. There is even an appropriateness to it in this book, for people who run dude ranches are entertainers. Besides, this is light summer reading, which is traditionally on the breezy side. And even those whose tastes in prose are more severe may find that the book stirs memories of a piece of country which is, in my recollection, every bit as wonderful as the authors say it is.

Struggles of the Artistic Life

A THING OF BEAUTY. By A. J. Cronin. Little, Brown. $4.

By ANTHONY BAILEY

MR. CRONIN has a reputation as a "professional novelist" or a "good story-teller" and his latest book has the lulling effect those terms imply. I picked it up, remembering that *The Citadel* had given me, at the age of fourteen, a strong desire to be a doctor and to save humanity. And I thought that intellectual fashions one adopts at a later age had, perhaps, made me unfair to writers of this kind. But I was wrong. This book is a sedative.

It purports to be the story of a great painter's life and it is no compliment to say that Mr. Cronin gets as near to depicting Genius as Henry James did in *Roderick Hudson*. James' first attempt, however, did have some subtlety to recommend it; Mr. Cronin's book has none. It is, first of all, one of those chronicle novels that seem to be demanded by women's monthly magazines in which no development of character is required but instead "interesting characters" and much local color. One of the first demands therefore, is a wide stratum of dramatis personae: we have here the Rector of Stillwater, the Reverend Bertram Desmonde, who wants his son, Stephen, to take Orders, and marry Claire, daughter of Lady Broughton. Stephen, wanting to be a great artist, naturally prefers to go off to Paris. This he does, having passed some time in the East End of London, in a Settlement House where he is hated by the Reverend Crispin Bliss, the prelate in charge. But he is also loved by Jenny, the poor little cockney servant-girl, to whom, a number of years and pages later, he returns, of course, to marry. In addition to Paris and Stephen's friend Modigliani, we are given a variety of effete Englishmen, crooked art dealers, a traveling circus with lots of 'types,' a *gamine* who fools our hero, a trip to Spain, the first symptoms of pulmonary tuberculosis (which later becomes "advanced") together with numerous occasions on which our hero is shown as the persecuted artist. His pictures are burnt by enraged townspeople. The Royal Academy rejects him: a friend took along a picture unbeknown to Stephen who would never, of course, submit a picture to such a reactionary institution. And so on and on.

The infuriating thing about this sort of book is that one can tell oneself that it's manna for the masses only for so long; and there comes a point where one rebels out of simple embarrassment. Of course we know that, if we aren't treated to a happy ending, Stephen will die of TB and his name will live on. His pictures will be hung in the Tate and the Luxembourg. His father will eventually come to realize that there may be something, even though he can't quite grasp what, in the creative life; and then there's compassion and posthumous forgiveness. But this isn't the creative life which is here recounted, and nowhere is there any insight at all into what could possibly engage or destroy the inquiring intelligence. Nicolas de Stael and F.O. Matthiessen and others faced what Camus calls "the divorce between the mind that desires and the world that disappoints. . . ." Some choose to go; some choose to stay. Some create; some do not. But that this sort of tawdry nonsense should be foisted off as the artistic life by an author who can write pages of even semi-literate English is, if not an insult, at least a sort of confidence trick.

Mr. Cronin's prose is perhaps an indication of his quality. It is that pseudo Pre-Raphaelite English which dwells on "maid-servants" and the vintages of Port. Everything is "delicious," from spring weather to good working-class tea.

Why, then, take this book seriously at all? As I said, partly because it seems to be a lie. Partly, too, because there is something sad in finding that after all one was right about this kind of book.

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Humor and Insight

THE BOUND MAN. By Ilse Aichinger. Translated by Eric Mossbacher. Noonday. $2.75.

By PATRICIA DONEGAN

WITH DRAMATIC intensity, marvelous descriptive insight and some of the measured tread of the fairy tale, Ilse Aichinger writes of angels and men in her slim volume of short stories, *The Bound Man*. Although many of these stories are in the Kafka tradition, the symbols illuminate rather than obscure. In the title story, "the bound man" has been intricately tied up with a rope which still allows him a certain freedom of movement within its confines. Developing a delicately balanced pattern of mobility within this limitation, "the bound man" becomes a circus celebrity, a creature of grace, agility and courage. He refuses ever to be untied, even in sleep, and it is only when a fond hand cuts the rope in mistaken kindness that he is forced into the ignominy of shame and retreat, his one-time admirers howling at his heels.

Implicit in this kind of writing is a kind of detachment, as if the author were scanning the characters from a vast distance. They appear to be truly symbols, seen flat against a lyricized background into which bits of dialogue come from nowhere and fall like pronouncements. Miss Aichinger has a deft touch, and a gift for the quick phrase which delineates character. "The Woman had the staring eyes of the insatiably inquisitive. No-one had ever obliged her by getting run over outside her house." The author also has a gift for creating tension by almost lyric description. Of particular excellence is a remarkable passage concerning December days which introduces "Angel in the Night," one of the better stories in this book.

Miss Aichinger is concerned with the tragedy of the human situation, which is evident behind the pathos and irony of her stories. A little boy mistrusts grown-ups when his mad tutor is dragged away. "We only wanted to play," he insists. A little girl is left barren when her practical friends deny her the angels, and the bound man welcomes his bondage and fears his freedom. There is even a woman who fades away the minute she takes off her sun glasses. The author also has a sense of humor, and if it has the bitter taste of irony it is because it rises from the irony of the human situation. Miss Aichinger is a remarkable writer.

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Meditations

THE LIVING BREAD, By Thomas Merton. Farrar, Straus. $3.

By J. N. MOODY

CHRISTIANITY is Christ. It is through the Eucharist that we become fully Christians, for it is in this sacrament that we are most closely united to Christ. This is the theme of a book of meditations which the distinguished Trappist, Thomas Merton, has written for the Priest's Eucharistic League, but which could be used by any Catholic.

It might be emphasized that this slim volume is not a defense of a doctrine, nor a treatise upon it, but a series of reflections. Its form permits the author to range rather widely over many aspects of the sacred mystery. Christ's love for man, the Mass, the Real Presence, the effects of Communion—these are some of the topics he develops with the use of the Scripture, the Fathers, and his own contemplation.

"In Holy Communion, it is not we who transform the Body of Christ into ourselves, as happens with ordinary food: He assimilates us and transforms us into Himself." To help us realize this, the author urges three ways to make more fruitful communions: active participation in the liturgy; a more sustained attempt to realize in our lives the charity which is the key to the Eucharist; and meditation before the Blessed Sacrament.

It is the second of these which receives the fullest treatment. Saint Irenaeus is quoted to the effect that the gift that is really acceptable to God is our love for one another, and this is the principal effect of the Eucharist. The joy of Communion is the consciousness of our mutual sharing in the life of Christ. Saint John Chrysostom advises that we express that consciousness by giving alms to the poor, and thus honor the Body of Christ. Equally, Communion should help us play our personal part in building up the Body of Christ, thus binding ourselves to the other members of the Body in fraternal cooperation. The effect of our efforts may well be a visible union of all mankind, for this was God's purpose in giving us the Eucharist.

The author succeeds in his purpose to give us meditations on the Eucharist which are devoid of sentimentality. But in the opinion of this reviewer, this is not Merton at his best. In his other volumes, his thought and style appeared to have transformed the familiar truths. *The Living Bread,* despite its excellent material, seems to lack that fire that made his other writing so memorable.

Tale of Hope

THE BURNT OFFERING. By Albrecht Goes. Translated by Michael Hamburger. Pantheon $2.50.

By ANNE FREMANTLE

THE Bourbons, on one of their frequent returns to power, were said to have learned nothing and forgotten nothing. Many

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people who have visited Germany either between the wars, or since World War II, have been worried by the bourbonish quality of German resurgence. They are fearful lest the phoenix whose economic index is now over two hundred per cent above the 1935 figure, might prove to be only the same old vulture after all.

A slight but sturdy clear counternote of a hope is this brief tale, told by a Protestant pastor—certainly the first book to be translated which "dares to sharpen the thorn of German guilt" as the dust-cover states it. It tells simply of a butcher's wife, who, when her husband is drafted, takes over his business, and is told one day by the local Gestapo agent that she is to be the Jews' butcher and give them their minute rations of meat and fats. The way in which the horror and the holiness of the situation is conveyed by the Friday evening silence that is the Sabbath Shalom is superb; and the way the butcher's wife breaks down when the nine-months pregnant woman gives her her baby carriage on the way to the gas chamber marvelously avoids what might have become obvious sentimentality.

The book's flaw is the attempt to characterize Sabine and her father, individuals who never come alive, who hold up Frau Walker's direct and valid narratives. One swallow notoriously makes no summer, nor does one small book necessarily indicate any melting of the glacial indifference of most contemporary German writers to their immediate past. But since St. Augustine urges us to receive any good as though we ourselves were starving (as indeed we are), this authentic golden gleam of winter aconite is to be welcomed.

REVIEWERS

William Dunlea is a free-lance writer who reviews for this and other journals.

Anthony Bailey is on the editorial staff of the *New Yorker*.

Patricia Donegan contributes frequent reviews to The Commonweal.

Father J. N. Moody edited *The Church and Society*.

Anne Fremantle, a contributing editor of The Commonweal, has edited *The Age of Belief* and *Christmas is Here*.

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The Commonweal in '56

The year's halfway mark supplies a natural vantage point for looking both forward and back. A glance at the issues of the past six months does disclose a great deal about the good reading that is typical of The Commonweal. Here, for instance, are some of the authors who have appeared in these pages the past six months:

Christopher Dawson
William J. Donovan
Graham Greene
Bede Griffiths, O.S.B.
Robert C. Hartnett, S.J.
Harold C. Hinton
Robert M. Hutchins
Sam Hynes
John LaFarge, S.J.
Msgr. Luigi G. Ligutti
Donald McDonald
Francis E. McMahon
Thomas Molnar
Donat O'Donnell
J. F. Powers
William V. Shannon
Martin Turnell
Evelyn Waugh
Helen C. White
Frederick D. Wilhelmsen

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